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Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits

Economic and environmental questions: Science and technology for development

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-President of the Council, Dalius Čekuolis (Lithuania), on the basis of informal consultations

Follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

The Economic and Social Council,

Welcoming the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society,[1]

Recalling the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action, adopted in Geneva in 2003, and the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, adopted in Tunis in 2005 by the World Summit on the Information Society and endorsed by the General Assembly,[2]

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[1] See A/60/687.

[2] General Assembly resolutions 59/220 and 60/252.

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Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[3]

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on modalities of the inter-agency coordination of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, including recommendations on the follow-up process,[4] which reviews the actions taken since the convening of the Summit and emphasizes the need for full implementation of its decisions,

Taking note also of the ongoing United Nations reform process,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 60/252 of 27 March 2006, in which the Assembly requested the Council to oversee the system-wide follow-up of the Geneva and Tunis outcomes of the Summit, and to that end requests the Council, at its substantive session of 2006, to review the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, including considering strengthening the Commission, taking into account the multi-stakeholder approach,

Bearing in mind its decision 1992/218 of 30 April 1992 and resolution 1992/62 of 31 July 1992, by which the Council established the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and defined its terms of reference, as well as its decision 2005/308 of 27 July 2005 on the methods of work of the Commission,

Recognizing the need to strengthen the Commission in order to enable it to undertake activities defined by the Summit, taking into account the multi-stakeholder approach,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields,

Recognizing that the implementation and follow-up of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society should be an integral part of the integrated follow-up to

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[3] General Assembly resolution 60/1.

[4] E/2006/85.

major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields and should contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and should not require the creation of any new operational bodies,[5]

Acknowledging the urgent need to bridge the digital divide and to assist developing countries, including those countries with special needs as stated in the Summit outcome documents, to benefit fully from the potential of information and communication technologies,[6]

Stressing the importance of the Summit outcomes to the building of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society so as to enhance digital opportunities for all people in order to help to bridge the digital divide,[7]

Welcoming the multi-stakeholder participation in the Summit and in its follow-up as a constructive way of dealing with present and future challenges in building the information society,

Reaffirming the need for ensuring an effective partnership and cooperation between Governments and the relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the academic and scientific communities and the private sector, in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the Summit,

Taking note of the action taken by the Secretary-General to convene the Internet Governance Forum,

Taking note also of the request to the Secretary-General to start a process towards enhanced cooperation, as referred to in paragraphs 69 to 71 of the Tunis Agenda,[8]

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[5] See General Assembly resolution 60/252, fourth preambular paragraph.

[6] Ibid., fifth preambular paragraph.

[7] Ibid., seventh preambular paragraph.

[8] A/60/687, chap. I, sect. B.

Taking note further of the establishment, within the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, of the United Nations Group on the Information Society, consisting of the relevant United Nations bodies and organizations, with the mandate to facilitate the implementation of the Summit outcomes, and noting the importance of the Council's being kept informed of the progress in its work as a part of the annual reporting on the work of inter-agency bodies to the Council,

Acknowledging with appreciation the role played by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in providing secretariat support to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development,

Follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society

1. *Welcomes* the strong development orientation of the outcomes of both the Geneva and the Tunis phases of the Summit, and urges their full implementation;

2. *Decides* to carry out its responsibilities for overseeing the system-wide follow-up to the Summit outcomes in the context of its annual consideration of the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in its coordination segment on the basis of a thematic approach and a multi-year programme, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, on the basis of the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and drawing upon other relevant inputs;

3. *Takes note* of the important role of United Nations regional commissions and encourages them to undertake specific activities in accordance with the Summit outcomes;

Role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

Mandate

4. *Decides* that, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 57/270 B and 60/252, the Commission shall effectively assist the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up, in particular the review and assessment of progress

made in implementing the outcomes of the Summit, while at the same time maintaining its original mandate on science and technology for development, also taking into account the provisions of paragraph 60 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome;[3]

5. *Agrees* that the system-wide follow-up shall have a strong development orientation;

6. *Decides* that, in the exercise of its responsibility as defined in paragraph 4 above, the Commission shall review and assess progress made in implementing the outcomes of the Summit and advise the Council thereon, including through the elaboration of recommendations to the Council aimed at furthering the implementation of the Summit outcomes, and that to that end, the Commission shall:

(*a*) Review and assess progress at the international and regional levels in the implementation of action lines, recommendations and commitments contained in the outcome documents of the Summit;

(*b*) Share best and effective practices and lessons learned and identify obstacles and constraints encountered, actions and initiatives to overcome them and important measures for further implementation of the Summit outcomes;

(*c*) Promote dialogue and foster partnerships, in coordination with other appropriate United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, to contribute to the attainment of the Summit objectives and the implementation of its outcomes and to use information and communication technologies for development and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, with the participation of Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations and other international organizations in accordance with their different roles and responsibilities;

Composition

7. *Decides also* that the Commission shall be strengthened in its substantive capacity and enhanced through effective and meaningful participation of Member States in its work, and that the Commission shall be enlarged by the inclusion of ten new members, which shall be

elected bearing in mind the principle of balanced and equitable geographical distribution and in accordance with procedures and timetables to be established by the Council, from among the States Members of the United Nations or States members of specialized agencies;

Working methods

8. *Decides further* that the Commission shall meet annually for a period of five working days in Geneva on a trial basis, with the Commission reviewing this arrangement after two years and making recommendation to the Council thereon;

9. *Decides* that, in line with Economic and Social Council decision 2005/308 and in the exercise of its responsibilities as defined in paragraph 4 above, the Commission shall continue working on the basis of biennial action cycles;

10. *Decides also*, taking into account the Commission's mandates as set out in paragraph 4 above, that at its next session the Commission shall develop its agenda and a multi-year work programme;

11. *Recommends* that the Commission provide for Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations and other international organizations to participate effectively in its work and contribute, within their areas of competence, to its deliberations;

12. *Decides* that future sessions of the Commission will increasingly be conducted in the form of interactive dialogue;

13. *Decides also* that, in addition to its traditional working practices, the Commission will continue to explore development-friendly and innovative uses of electronic media, drawing upon existing online databases on best practices, partnership projects and initiatives, as well as other collaborative electronic platforms, which would allow all stakeholders to contribute to follow-up efforts, share information, learn from the experience of others and explore opportunities for partnerships;

Multi-stakeholder approach

14. *Decides further* that, while using the multi-stakeholder approach effectively, the intergovernmental nature of the Commission should be preserved;

15. *Decides* that:

(*a*) Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, non-governmental organizations and civil society entities not in consultative status with the Council, but which received accreditation to the World Summit on the Information Society, may participate, upon approval by the Council in a timely manner, on an exceptional basis and without prejudice to the established rules of the United Nations, in the next two meetings of the Commission, this provision being based on the understanding that in the meantime, said organizations and entities will apply for consultative status with the Council in accordance with existing rules and procedures, and that in accordance with Council resolution 1996/31, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations is invited to consider such applications, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations, and to do so as expeditiously as possible;

(*b*) On an exceptional basis, without prejudice to existing rules of procedure, business-sector entities, in particular those that received accreditation to the Summit, may participate, upon approval by the Council in a timely manner, in the work of the Commission in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Council;

16. *Decides also* that every effort should be made by the Commission, in collaboration with relevant United Nations bodies and other interested parties, to mobilize and ensure the meaningful and effective participation, including by providing assistance on a voluntary basis, of all stakeholders from developing countries, including non-governmental organizations, small and medium-sized enterprises, industry associations and development actors;

Secretariat support

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure effective and adequate secretariat support by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for the Commission, to enable it to fulfil its mandate as outlined in paragraph 4 above, while ensuring in this regard close collaboration with other relevant United Nations organizations and specialized agencies;

Reporting

18. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to inform the Commission on the implementation of the Summit outcomes as a part of his annual reporting to the Commission;

19. *Requests* the Commission to submit to the Council, within its annual report, information on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the Summit outcomes at the regional and international levels;

20. *Decides* to keep the General Assembly apprised, through its annual report on progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the World Summit outcomes, taking into account the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.